

## Ladies' Portfolio.

The LADIES of North Carolina are invited to contribute short articles, recipes, suggestions, household hints, &c., for these columns. Name of the author will be seen by no one except the EDITOR, whether the communication be accepted or rejected.

### About the Farm.

BY A FARMER.

It would seem so at first thought. They call it "Ensilage in the Maize." I will read you an article upon it, entitled "Ensilage in the United States," written by Francis Morris, of Oakland Manor, Howard county, Maryland. He says:

"I have been requested to give my experience in growing corn fodder, preserving it in silos or trenches, and feeding it to stock. I sowed on the first of August, 1876, about five acres, in drills three feet apart, and about a bushel of corn to the acre. This was worked twice with a cultivator and was in tassels in the first days in October. We cut the same with a mowing machine, carried it in wagons to the feed cutter; cut it up in one inch pieces, and added to it an amount of wheat straw, cut up in same manner, equal to one fifth of the corn fodder.

"I had three silos (trenches) bricked up underneath my stone barn. They were ten feet deep, 4 feet wide and 24 feet long. The fodder was well packed down in these trenches by treading upon it while the mixture was put in, and then covered with boards, with large, heavy stones upon them. After the weights had pressed it down very considerably, they were taken off, the boards covered with straw, and then with clay, the clay being well packed, made a perfect protection against the oxygen of the air penetrating it.

"The first trench was opened for use on Christmas, and I fed all my milking cows with the same. Two of them refused to eat their portion, and when they left, the other cows ate it, and from that day I have never fed it to an animal that has refused it—horses, mules, oxen, cows, sheep and hogs, will all leave any other food and eat this from choice.

"In the year 1877, from want of personal attention and from a very dry time, my corn fodder was not as large a crop as it should have been, but it was sufficient to feed nearly one thousand head of stock for over two months; it was equally good in quality as it was in 1877. For this year—1878—I have more than double the quantity of this fodder. I have made and filled a very large trench out of doors, which will hold from 50 to 75 tons, besides filling the three trenches in the barn.

"In a long experience in raising stock, I have found corn fodder, preserved as above, the best food for milch cows that I ever used. It is equal, if not superior to June grass; and its cultivation is so easy, its preservation so inexpensive, that to-day no one can estimate its advantages to the agriculturist. The average hay crop of New York State is not equal to one ton per acre, and every one knows what a costly crop it is to raise, to care and preserve after it is raised, while our corn crop will grow and flourish with the most ordinary care.

"Twenty-five tons to the acre, with a light dressing of barn-yard manure and working it twice with a cultivator, is a small crop. Add to the manure a dressing of guano, and more than double the quantity can be raised to the acre. I am almost afraid to state the quantity that can be thus raised per acre. Suppose, however, we put the product down to 25 tons per acre, what would be the result in N. Y. State if one tenth of her arable land was used in this way? We should have to double the number of our horses, cows, sheep and all our stock, and after doing that, double them again. In fact, the amount of stock that could be maintained is so great that we should be wholly independent of the West. The old adage "No cattle, no corn," is fully verified by the wheat production in N. Y. State. The lands are all so indifferent in quality that he must be a bold farmer who now sows a field of wheat. But the corn fodder, which it is now proposed to raise will give such a yearly amount of manure as will enable every farmer to get a wheat crop of 30 to 40 bushels to the acre, and succeed that by clover. After that is done, his progress to a maximum yield of cereals will be very rapid.

### POINTS ABOUT ENSILAGE OF MAIZE.

All fermentation, both before and after packing away, must be avoided to attain perfect preservation. Protect the trench well against the external air, and also press out the air which is all through the mass, by heavy weights on the boards covering it. When well pressed and settled together, cover tightly with clay or compact earth. Never leave the fodder in the field to dry at all, but get it chopped fine and into the trenches as soon as possible after being cut down. It is better to cut it half inch than longer, for it will pack closer when short, and exclude the air better. When the trench is full and well trod down, cover about two inches of straw over it, then cover all closely with boards laid across the trench instead of lengthwise, as in this way, when you come to use it, a little can be uncovered at a time, and chopped down to the bottom of the trench.

"After putting the boards on, cover them evenly with very heavy weights,—rocks or bags of earth can be used—one thousand pounds to the square yard for an eight or ten foot deep trench would be none too

much. Of course the boards must fit inside the trench. It will not do to arch the trench over and cover it, for the green forage will settle away from it, and soon be ruined. The air must be expelled by the weighted cover following down with the fodder, until the limit of contraction and thorough expulsion of air is reached, and the forage is a solid compact mass. Have the trenches covered by a permanent or a temporary shed with tight roof.

Here is something more, Squire, in favor of raising corn fodder for cows. Prof. L. B. Arnold recently stated that he had taken the milk of three patrons of a cheese factory, in October, who were feeding nothing but grass, and the milk of three others who fed nothing but corn sown broadcast. He took an equal quantity of the milk of each, and curdling it with the same amount of rennet, at the same temperature, found, after drying the curd, that the milk of the corn-fed cows gave eight and one half per centum of curd, while that fed on grass alone gave only six and one half per centum of curd; showing a gain of nearly thirty-three per centum in favor of corn fodder over grass.

In the patois of the Landes, which one might be tempted to confound with the Japanese or Chinese idioms, a tehanka is a person mounted on stilts, and se tehanker means to mount upon stilts. These ten tehankas had all the same traditional costume, without distinction of sex, that is to say, a beret on the head, a mantle of wool over the shoulders, a buttoned doublet, bare feet, and the legs enveloped in a camano or fleecy, fixed by red garters. Their stilts raised them five or six feet from the ground. A pole served them as a third point of support. Seen from a distance they looked like gigantic grasshoppers. The tehanka, however, is seen to perfection on the bare land, motionless and fixed like a solitary triangle, at sunset or else when he leans against a pine tree, silently knitting stockings and guarding a black and lean flock. Stern and mute in the midst of the crowd, which was examining them with curiosity, their thoughts were concentrated solely on the gain that they were about to dispute. The prize was not much. The victor won twenty francs. But twenty francs in the eyes of the tehanka represent a fortune. Soon, at a signal given by the president of the fete, they all ten spread over the beach, howling and yelling. If it had not been for their immense strides, which pass imagination, you might have thought that you were present at an Arabian fantasia. Their evolutions were the same, accomplished with the same rapidity, in conditions which touched upon the impossible and on the ground where the stilt sunk in a foot at each step. Their mantles streaming in the wind, like those of Arabian cavaliers, they ran and pivoted round as deftly as if they had been on foot. The women were by no means inferior to the men; one of them, in fact, came in second, and they were only to be distinguished by their more piercing cries. This race was followed by some private exercises performed by the tehankas, in order to provoke the generosity of the spectators. They jumped, they sat down and rose up again, and they picked up as they ran pieces of money that were thrown to them. This spectacle was not the least extraordinary. Bouncing forward at full speed, the man was suddenly seen to stop, the stilts bent, fell, as it were, to pieces, then something was seen moving between three pieces of wood, like the body of a spider in the middle of its long legs. The whole performance was done with lightning rapidity, the stilts rose again and the man reappeared on the top of them and resumed his course.

**ENCOURAGING THE SOUTH.**—We noticed lately in that ably conducted paper, the *Baltimore Evening Bulletin*, a statistical article upon the decrease of property value in the North, and increased wealth in the old slave-holding States since 1870. While in Pennsylvania and other Northern States, the aggregated value of property has decreased hundreds of millions, the resources of the South and Southwest, have increased beyond conception, notwithstanding the great depression and unsettled condition attendant upon an entire change in their social and labor systems. The indomitable energy of the Southern people has led them into paths of industry and economy—sure roads to prosperity. They have seen the necessity of improving their lands, giving less attention to special crops, such as cotton and tobacco; diversifying their crops; stock raising; fruit growing, and last, not least, making investments in manufacturing at home what they need, as well as working up the raw material of cotton and tobacco, not alone for home consumption but for export. These are the great causes which already have produced the startling results above stated. The South has also been forced by her poverty, to grow her corn and other breadstuffs, and to a great extent her own meats, whereby a vast amount is added to her substantial wealth, and saved the expenditure of millions of dollars in other States annually to procure these articles of necessary food for her people and her cattle and horses.

The mother of H. F. Badger is anxious to know where he is now living. She has not heard from him since November, 1877. He was then near Castalia postoffice, N. C. It is supposed he went to Florida. North Carolina and Florida papers will confer a great favor by publishing this. Information sent to Mrs. M. G. Badger, Richmond, Va., will be gratefully received.

## The Commissioner vs. The Board of Agriculture

The *Daily News*, in a well written article which we should be pleased to quote entire, but for lack of space, differs with us in respect to the constitution of the Department of Agriculture. It prefers the Board, as at present constituted, and deprecates the suggestion to place full powers in a single Head, —to-wit, the Commissioner. We reproduce the gist of the *News'* article, with only this further remark that we could agree with the *News* in theory but for our knowledge of the defective working of the theory when reduced to practice. No man would be so silly as to cast any reflections upon the *personelle* of the present Board, whether in respect to ability or integrity; yet the fact stands out that after three years of trial the machinery of the Department is not working so smoothly, nor so efficiently, as it might. A few months will complete the *third year* of the Department's work, and if we may judge anything from letters and remarks that come to us almost daily, there is a decided desire for practical fruits in return for the heavy expense. Says the *News*:

"Our conviction is clear that no one man should be invested with absolute power over the great sums paid yearly into the treasury for the Agricultural Department, nor should he have it in his power to direct the policy of an institution that reaches by a net work of correspondents over every township in North Carolina, and is capable of being transformed into one of the most powerful engines of political ambition ever conceived. On this we are sure that the people are firm.

The Experiment Station of Connecticut is managed most creditably by a Board, with a *Secretary as the executive officer*, in the place of our Commissioner. Such we believe was the original intention of the framers of the act creating our Department of Agriculture. In that case the public would, from the beginning, have placed the responsibility for the direction of the Department upon the Board, as was really intended. But instead of that, we are of opinion that much credit was given in the inception and organization of the Department to the Commissioner, which was due in a large measure to the Board, and now that some of its developments prove to be unpopular there is apparently a disposition to discover that the blame is due to the Board.

The Georgia plan, as it is called, provides for a Commissioner with full control, but as the Agricultural Department in that State is at this time the subject of heated controversy in regard to its management, it would be well to wait before hastily advocating a departure from our old ways in this State to imitate her in this respect.

As to the personnel of the present Board, it seems to us to be eminently well constituted, for the most part. Who are these? The President of the State Agriculture College (for it must be remembered that the University is not represented in this Board *per se*, but only as it is in law the College of Agriculture and the Mechanic Arts, for which the State pays interest on the forfeited scrip), who is at the head of agricultural instruction in our borders, and under whose eye lives the Director of the Experimental Station, with his attaches; the President of the State Agricultural Society, one of the largest and most experienced practical farmers and manufacturers in the State, and whose position brings him in contact with the advanced agriculturists of North Carolina; the Master of the State Grange, who is at the head of an organization with affiliated branches in every section of the State devoted to the improvement of the farmer's condition; the State Geologist, who is or ought to be familiar with the capacities and resources of every part of North Carolina, and whose scientific advice must be invaluable to such a Board, and the Governor, who at least, by virtue of the prominence that has elevated him into position, is presumed to know and gauge the men fit to be officers and employees of the department. To these the law adds two farmers chosen for their devotion to and knowledge of agriculture as it is practiced among us.

We do not say that there are not defects in the law. We think there should be a fixed term of office for the Commissioner, with a regular limitation, and for others likewise, so that the election of another would not imply absolute extension from office. This should apply to the two members of the Board, also chosen from the citizens. We are not sure that the lawyers could not pick a hole in the constitutionality of the choice of an officer of a secret society as a constituent member of a State Board. We wish to express our views in perfect candor. It is by the ripple of opposing tides of opinion that the golden sands of truth will be deposited deep in the public heart."

Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Skinner was in pastor of the First Baptist Church, Raleigh, on Sunday. The *Observer* says that Dr. S. remarked "it was not often the case that a pastor, after having served a church for thirteen years, and then, after twelve years' absence, to be again called to its pastorate. He had always desired, when absent, to return to Raleigh, but had never expected to do so."

"Some of our churches are ever adding to their numbers, without increasing their efficiency. They remind me of dirt-daubers' nests. A dirt-dauber builds a spider and then crams him away in his nest, and he will do the same for another, and yet another, until the nest is packed full of dead spiders. And so it is with our churches." R.

H. Griffith, at Middle District Association. Who can give us any light on this subject of dirt-daubers? Why do they make their nests and fill them in just that way?—*Religious Herald*. The dirt-dauber builds her nest just that way, and after depositing an egg at the bottom of each cell, she fills the cell full of spiders rendered torpid, not killed, so that they may remain alive and sound—good food for the young dirt-dauber during its infancy, &c. The cells are closed when filled and remain so till the young wasps cut its way out at maturity. The figure of Dr. Griffith is not a good one—unless he intends us to understand him as recommending torpid church-members as food for young preachers. We have long thought it strange that scientific men did not try to find out the method of embalming used by dirt-daubers. The spiders stung or bitten by them are not dead and undergo no change.—*Biblical Recorder*.

Raleigh *Observer*: Four convicts were the other day taken out to the penitentiary, whose names and terms of sentence were: Jack Williams, white, 20 years; Moses Hinton, colored, 1 year; Fred. Hinton, colored, 1 year; Burley Haywood, colored, 1 year.—The revival at the Baptist Church at Rolesville continues. Twenty-seven persons were admitted into the church on Sunday, and great interest in the meeting continues.—Governor Jarvis' gold-headed canes which he lost at Beaufort, has been found.—The revival of religion near Auburn continues, and there have been many conversions.—The Central Baptist Association was held at Olive Branch, this county. There was a large attendance. Introductory sermon by Rev. T. H. Pritchard, D. D. Nat. E. Cannady, of Granville, was elected Moderator; B. F. Montague, of Raleigh, Secretary and Treasurer; and Rev. J. S. Purefoy, Historian.

Kinston *Journal*: We hear of a cutting scrape occurring at Harper's mill, in Trent township, on the 14th instant. One Amos Davis and Anthony Hill had an altercation, a fight ensued, and Hill received four knife cuts—one on the shoulder, two slight ones in the back, and a very dangerous one in the right breast.—It is generally believed that seven or eight years is the limit of a squirrel's age. Mr. John Tull, near Kinston, has one that will be thirteen years old this month. He is perfectly blind, but still lively and healthy.—With all the vines and treats offered the editors at their annual reunion, we failed to see a drunken man on the whole trip. Their heads were, and we hope always will continue to be, level.

An outrage was committed by a tramp upon Miss Maggie Stealms, whose parents reside near Lynchburg. Miss Stealms, it appears, was sent by her parents to a neighbor's house on some domestic errand, and when about a mile from home she was attacked by the tramp, outraged, and then gagged, tied to a tree, and left. She succeeded, however, in untying the string with her teeth, and returning home gave the alarm. Her father and two brothers started in pursuit of the perpetrator of the base act, but at last accounts he had not been captured. Miss Stealms is only thirteen years old.

Right here we would state, for the information of any who are troubled with smut, that bluestone is a sure preventive of smut. Make a solution, say one pound of bluestone to ten bushels of wheat; put the wheat you wish to sow the following morning in the soak the previous evening; take out on the morning, add a little more bluestone and put in your wheat for afternoon. We have followed this plan for four or five years and never have any smut, while others who sow without soaking have any amount of smut.

Franklin *Reporter*: Mr. B. F. Evans, on going to his mica mine a few days since, found a sheep down in his shaft, seventy feet deep. The sheep was unhurt with the exception of a small piece of flesh being knocked off its chin.—We have been shown by Prof. C. D. Smith, of this place, some handsome specimens of sapphire and oriental amethysts, which he found in Jackson county. Some of these stones are sufficiently pure and of ample size to cut sets for jewelry.

Monroe *Enquirer*: The mineral spring discovered a few weeks ago, one mile and a half from town, has been christened Telula Glen. Another sulphur spring on the land, and near the residence of Mr. John C. Williams, four miles east of town, has within the last week been brought to the attention of our people, though it was discovered long ago.

Asheville *Journal*: Wm. Townsend was convicted at this term of the Superior Court for the shooting and cutting of Thomas Norvill, a few weeks ago, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the county jail. Norvill is up and at his shop, but he will not be able to talk above a whisper, owing to his windpipe having been severed.

Warrenton *Gazette*: Herr Gilsey, a German farm laborer, was struck and instantly killed last Friday, by a falling tree, while at work in the woods getting timber for Col. Lindsay Price. His skull was badly crushed, his right arm broken in two places, and one of his thighs broken and badly mangled.

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